

MANNINGHAM U3A INCORPORATED

BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

1. Manningham U3A Incorporated regards the dignity of all people as a core value of the organisation. Bullying behaviour is based on the misuse of power in human relationships, and negates the dignity and autonomy of its victims.
2. Manningham U3A Incorporated is fully committed to endeavouring to eliminate all forms of bullying in its operating environment and relationships, through a culture of openness, support, and accountability.

Purpose

3. The purpose of this document is to outline Manningham U3A Incorporated's position on bullying and to document the process for responding to any report of bullying.

Policy

4. This policy deals with unreasonable behaviour that is deemed by the President or Vice President or, in their absence, by an elected member of the Committee to constitute bullying.
5. "Unreasonable behaviour" is behaviour that is intentionally offensive, humiliating, intimidating, degrading, abusive or threatening. It includes, but is not limited to:
 - 5.1 verbal abuse
 - 5.2 unreasonably excluding or isolating another person or persons
 - 5.3 humiliation through sarcasm, belittling or ignoring someone's opinions
 - 5.4 constant or repeated criticism, insults or badgering
 - 5.5 spreading misinformation or malicious rumours
 - 5.6 displaying written or pictorial material which may degrade or offend
 - 5.7 deliberately setting work routines or procedures that in the opinion of the affected member or of a member of the Committee, are intended to inconvenience certain persons
 - 5.8 disproportionate assignment of unpleasant or meaningless work that in the opinion of the affected member or a member of the Committee, is intended to inconvenience certain persons.
 - 5.9 using spoken language which may reasonably offend
 - 5.10 adverse comments made through social media

6. “Bullying” is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person or group of persons. It includes behaviour that could be expected to intimidate, offend, degrade, humiliate, undermine or threaten.
7. Bullying can occur between two or more members.
8. Bullying that directly inflicts pain or harm amounts to assault and will not be dealt with under this policy (refer to clause 21).
9. There will be occasional differences of opinion, conflicts and problems. Only when the treatment of another person is repeated, unreasonable, offensive or harmful does bullying exist.
10. Formerly accepted behaviour may be found to be bullying when it continues after a request from the complainant for the behaviour to stop, or at the point where it becomes intimidating, offensive or humiliating.
11. Manningham U3A Incorporated has a duty of care to provide a safe environment and accepts that duty of care and acts accordingly. Any allegations of bullying that are reported will be communicated to the President of Manningham U3A Incorporated who will be responsible for initiating a prompt, thorough and fair investigation.
12. Complaints will be treated in confidence, and where confidentiality cannot be guaranteed this will be clearly indicated to the complainant.
13. All parties will be treated with respect.
14. The person against whom the allegation is made has the right to natural justice – that is, the right to know what is alleged against them, the right to put their case in reply, and the right for any decision to be made by an impartial decision-maker.

Procedures

15. A person who believes that they are the subject of bullying should take firm, positive and prompt action. Where appropriate, the perceived bully/bullies should be made aware that their behaviour is offensive, unwelcome and unacceptable, and that it needs to stop immediately.
16. A member may observe bullying where the subject, for whatever reason, feels unable to speak directly to the perceived bully or to report the matter to Manningham U3A Incorporated’s Secretary.

That member should report the matter to the Manningham U3A Incorporated’s Secretary who will then speak with the subject to ascertain whether bullying has, in fact, occurred and what action the subject wishes to be taken.
17. The Secretary will document the complaint and take steps to inform the President immediately. An entry will be made on the Confidential Bullying Report Register showing a complaint I D, alleged offender, date complaint made, date President advised, brief outcome, date outcome determined and date complaint advised to office.

18. Where the behaviour continues, or the person who may be bullied feels unable to speak directly to the perceived bully, the Secretary should report the matter to Manningham U3A Incorporated's President as soon as possible, preferably immediately.
19. The President or appointed delegate will provide support to the complainant and ascertain the nature of the complaint and the wishes of the complainant. The complainant may opt to have the matter dealt with by formal investigation or by less formal means.

Either way the alleged bully will be informed of the complaint.
20. The complaint will be handled in accordance with Manningham U3A Incorporated's Grievance Policy.
21. Some forms of severe bullying, for example, physical attack or obscene phone calls, may constitute criminal conduct. While Manningham U3A Incorporated is committed to treat most complaints about bullying at an organisational level as far as is possible, potentially criminal conduct is not suited to internal resolution and should be handled by the criminal justice system. Complainants will be advised of the option of police support or intervention. It is not the obligation or duty of Manningham U3A Incorporated to report such matters to Victoria Police on behalf of the complainant.

Responsibility

22. Manningham U3A Incorporated's Committee of Management is responsible for developing, implementing, reviewing, publishing and promoting this policy.
23. It is the responsibility of Manningham U3A Incorporated's Committee of Management to ensure that:
 - 23.1 they understand and are committed to the right of all members to attend U3A activities and venues without fear of being bullied in any way
 - 23.2 all members are made aware of their obligations and responsibilities to foster a U3A environment that is free from bullying and therefore to report any instances of bullying which may come to their attention
 - 23.3 they foster an environment that discourages bullying, and set an example by their own conduct
 - 23.4 all complaints are treated promptly, seriously and confidentially
 - 23.5 they are, as far as practicable, aware of whether bullying is occurring, whether complaints are received or not, relying on such indices as –
 - sudden increases in absenteeism
 - sudden deterioration in participation
 - behavioural changes such as depression
 - 23.6 they take corrective action when they become aware of any offensive action
 - 23.7 guidance and education is provided subsequent to decisions relating to bullying
 - 23.8 ongoing support is provided in relation to the prevention of bullying.

24. It is the responsibility of all members to ensure that:
 - 24.1 they understand and are committed to the rights and entitlements of all members to attend U3A premises and activities without fear of bullying
 - 24.2 they help foster an environment that discourages bullying.
25. Manningham U3A Incorporated's Secretary is responsible for
 - 25.1 receiving and responding to enquiries about this policy
 - 25.2 receiving complaints about bullying and bringing the matter to the attention of the President as soon as possible, preferably immediately
 - 25.3 maintaining the Bullying Report Register and keeping the Committee fully informed.
26. The President of Manningham U3A Incorporated or appointed delegate is responsible for interviewing and supporting the complainant as well as interviewing the alleged offender.
27. The President of Manningham U3A Incorporated or appointed delegate is responsible for ensuring that a bullying complaint is handled in accordance with Manningham U3A Incorporated's Grievance Policy.

Authorisation

28. This policy was adopted by the Committee of Management of Manningham U3A Incorporated, and minuted as such, on 16 November 2015.

Related Manningham U3A Incorporated Policies:

- * Code of Conduct Policy
- * Anti-Discrimination policy
- * Grievance Policy
- * Sexual Harassment Policy